

Devastation.

PRAIRIE FIRES AND WIND

Cause Great Destruction of Life and Property in the Northwest.

Hundreds of Families Rendered Homeless and Millions of Dollars Lost.

INDESCRIBIBLE HORRORS.

Attempts of the Inhabitants to Check the Fury of the Destroyer

Are Futile—The Terrors of the Fires Added to by a Tornado—Towns, Villages and Hamlets Wiped From the Face of the Earth.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., April 4.—During the last two days South Dakota and Minnesota have been swept by a series of wind storms, which have caused hundreds of thousands of dollars damage to property, and many lives have been lost. The storm started Monday night and swept over a large area, south of the northern Pacific road in Dakota, and extending in the southern tier of counties in this State. The greatest damage has not been caused by the wind alone, but in many places, fire, fanned into fury by the storm, have wiped out of existence several small villages and hundreds of farmers' houses. The towns almost completely destroyed are Yola, Olivet, Yankton, Lesterville and Mt. Vernon, and three or four other villages were badly damaged. At Yola every house in the place except three is demolished and 100 people are without homes to-night. Lesterville was flattened to the ground and two families are without a roof.

A terrible gale of wind struck Mt. Vernon and fire started from a small house that was blown over early last night. The fire spread rapidly, and in an hour the business portion of the place was a great raging fire. Nearly two hundred families are homeless and the loss is estimated at \$500,000. It is reported that several persons lost their lives in this fire, but no confirmation has yet been received. Four large elevators and the Milwaukee depot were destroyed. The fire spread over 500 acres of land, and several hundred families are homeless. Several herds of horses were saved by swimming the river. In many places the crops were saved by the wind, and the farmers will have to be replanted. Travel was suspended on some lines of the road, so great was the force of the wind, the clouds of dust and the flames from the burning of the crops.

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THE WEST VIRGINIA END

At the National Capital Largely Increased in Size.

THE HEADQUARTERS CLOSED.

However, on Account of Matters over Which They Had No Control.

Gossip About the Offices and the Applicants Thereof.

Special Dispatch to the Intelligencer.

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 4.—West Virginia has captured the Capital. In addition to those reported here yesterday, nearly two car loads arrived this morning, and they could be found scattered in the several departments and in large groups in the various lobbies. General Goff, Congressman-elect Atkinson, National Committee-man Scott and Congressman Smith were among the arrivals. At 10 o'clock these gentlemen, together with Major McGinnis, met in General Goff's rooms at the Ebbitt and the others gathered in the corridor down stairs and awaited the result. The conference lasted for two hours, and then they went into "executive session," that they would be closed for only about an hour, but it was some time after 2 o'clock in the afternoon before they reported. Evidently there was quite an animated discussion over the distribution of the State's share of the federal patronage.

General Goff said when he came down stairs no conclusions had been arrived at. Senator Scott said that the merits of the several applicants for Collector, District Attorney, Marshal, etc., had been discussed, but no decision had been reached in any case and everything remained in as chaotic a state as before the conference began. Among the Wheelingites in the city are Senator Scott, Representative Atkinson, T. G. Moffat, C. H. Sweeney, J. W. Hoge and Professor Grogg.

Dr. Pipes is also here. He is credited with an ambition to represent the United States against the rest of the country. Mr. Sweeney claims to be the soldiers' candidate for Postmaster, while Mr. Moffat alleges he has the endorsement of a large number of the business men of Wheeling.

It is understood that some of the West Virginians have charges prepared which they will file with the Postmaster General, against Postmaster Simpson. The gist of these charges, it is said, will allege all the offenses with which the Wheeling public is familiar. This may be a very good thing, but it is not the intention of the West Virginians to make a political issue of the matter.

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TO-DAY, headed by S. V. Yantis, Sr., They wanted to get a postmaster appointed for Shepherdstown.

FOURTH-CLASS POSTMASTERS.

There were only five fourth-class postmasters appointed for West Virginia to-day, as follows: Hedgeville, Berkeley county, E. C. Henshaw; Jones's Springs, Berkeley county, David Wainwright; Tomahawk, Berkeley county, Joseph H. Kitchen; Metz, Marion county, Henry L. Campbell; Farmington, Marion county, J. S. F. Campbell.

General Goff says he will file some fifty or sixty recommendations for fourth-class postmasters to-morrow, whose appointments it is expected will be granted on this week.

Dr. D. Mayer, of Charleston, is among the West Virginians here. The Doctor was an applicant for the position of Consul or Minister to London, but he has withdrawn for the position to Turkey. Colonel Moore, of Clarkburg, is also among the West Virginians in town.

Mr. McGinnis says that the contest for the Buckhannon postoffice is still undecided.

THE "HEADQUARTERS" CLOSED.

The West Virginians have made their headquarters at the hotel Randall. About sixty of them were there this morning, but they are not there to-night. The establishment has been in litigation, and the West Virginians have been driven out of the hotel.

Considerable excitement resulted, because it was only a few days after the Randolph block, occupied by seven families and six stores, had been destroyed by a fire which was supposed to be of incendiary origin.

The fire in the postoffice block was put out without much trouble, and it was then found that some large sums of money had been burned, and that the fire had been started by a man who was in the building at the time.

For a time the police officials of the town were in a state of confusion, and it was not until late in the evening that the fire was put out.

On Tuesday night two young and beautiful girls were arrested for arson in the strength of a story which they told to Justice Kelly, when he sent them to the prison.

The prisoners are Emma T. and Henrietta Frances Day. The former is an attractive girl of nineteen, and her sister is a plump little beauty of sixteen. Two weeks ago the postoffice block in Summit was discovered to be on fire in one of the apartments on the second floor.

Considerable excitement resulted, because it was only a few days after the Randolph block, occupied by seven families and six stores, had been destroyed by a fire which was supposed to be of incendiary origin.

The fire in the postoffice block was put out without much trouble, and it was then found that some large sums of money had been burned, and that the fire had been started by a man who was in the building at the time.

For a time the police officials of the town were in a state of confusion, and it was not until late in the evening that the fire was put out.

On Tuesday night two young and beautiful girls were arrested for arson in the strength of a story which they told to Justice Kelly, when he sent them to the prison.